



State of Utah

Department of Natural Resources

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NEWS RELEASE

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STATE AGENCIES SIGN AGREEMENT TO RESTORE JORDAN RIVER WETLANDS

The Utah Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands, the Department of Transportation and Department of Corrections have entered into an agreement that will establish about 250 acres of wetlands and preserve existing wetlands near the Jordan River. The land is located west of the Jordan River Parkway Trail between 12600 South and Bangerter Highway in Salt Lake County.

"It's our desire to preserve these wetlands in a natural condition to enhance the natural values of the land," explained Dick Buehler, deputy director of the Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands. "This agreement will help us achieve that goal."

Currently, the Department of Corrections provides hot water to prison facilities from an underground geothermal well. Excess water from that source is diverted to a cooling pond onto state land where it cools.

The Department of Transportation has an obligation to manage, restore or create wetlands in exchange for developing certain transportation facilities. Wetlands mitigation banks are a method of storing wetlands until they are needed to trade for other wetlands that may be destroyed by development.

"UDOT wants to create a wetlands mitigation bank on the land and will provide support and funding to help us achieve our goal, and geothermal water from Corrections will be used to create wetlands instead of just being diverted to the Jordan River," said Buehler. "This is a real win-win situation for us and the citizens of Utah."

Work is expected to get underway late this summer.

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